

0815 A US

REMARKS

Applicants' attorney notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 7 and 9 and the indication of allowable subject matter included in claims 6 and 16.

Paragraph [0023] of the specification has been amended to more precisely recite the structural relationship of shaft coupling element 26 relative to end section 19 of first shaft 21. The amended paragraph conforms with the drawing as it was originally filed, and it therefore does not introduce new matter.

Independent claims 1, 4, and 10 have each been amended for clarification purposes by reciting that the cup-shaped cylinder is closed at one end by an end wall. That recitation does not involve a new issue because a cup is an open top vessel or container that includes a side wall and an end wall. Indeed, as defined in the first two definitions that appear in the *Random House Webster's College Dictionary*, 1991, page 331, a cup is "1. a small, open container made of china, glass, metal, etc usually with a handle, used chiefly as a drinking vessel for hot beverages 2. The bowllike part of a goblet or the like...." Clearly then, a cup-shaped cylinder, as recited in the claims, is a structure in the form of a container, and a container must have an end wall in order to contain material. Thus, an end wall was implicitly present as a part of the cup-shaped cylinder in the claims as they were originally presented, and therefore the amendment to recite that the cup-shaped cylinder includes an end wall does not introduce a new issue.

Claims 1, 3, 10 through 12, 14, and 17 were rejected as anticipated by the Damm et al. '483 reference. However, the Damm et al. reference does not disclose a cup-shaped cylinder, nor does it disclose such an element that is

0815 A US

axially movable. Instead, it shows in Figure 2 thereof an annular disengaging mechanism 30 that is carried on shaft 14 to define therewith a chamber within which an unnumbered, piston-like element is movably received to move a spring 28 that, in turn, contacts carrier disk 13 of a first clutch. Disengaging mechanism 30 is not in the form of a cup-shaped cylinder that is closed on one side by an end wall, but is an annular ring that is open.

In addition to not conforming structurally with the claimed cup-shaped cylinder, disengaging mechanism 30 is not axially movable, as suggested by the examiner. In fact, if it were, the imposition of hydraulic pressure within that mechanism would cause the annular ring to move axially along shaft 14, because there would be nothing to resist such axial movement, whereas axial movement of the inner piston would be restrained by spring 28. Consequently, disengaging mechanism 30 would not function to operate the associated clutch. Accordingly, disengaging mechanism 30 must be axially fixed to shaft 14, and not axially movable as is the cup-shaped cylinder recited in claims 1 and 10. Indeed, the examiner recognized that the second cylinder (disengaging mechanism 31) is axially fixed, and if the component referred to by the examiner as the second cylinder in the Damm et al. reference is axially fixed, then the correspondingly constructed first cylinder forming part of disengaging mechanism 30 must also be axially fixed.

Additionally, the communication with the chamber of the disengaging mechanism in the Damm et al. reference is by a radial conduit, not by an axial throughbore

0815 A US

as recited in amended claim 1. Therefore, the Damm et al. reference does not anticipate the structure as it is claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 10.

Because claims 3, 11, 12, 14, and 17 depend from claim 1, those claims are also not anticipated by the Damm et al. reference.

Independent claim 4 and dependent claims 5, 13, and 15 were rejected as obvious based upon the combination of the Damm et al. and Merkel et al. references. The Merkel et al. reference was cited for showing multi-plate clutches. However, as was the case with the Damm et al. reference, the Merkel et al. reference also does not show or suggest a first piston/cylinder unit for actuating a first clutch, wherein the first piston/cylinder unit includes a substantially cup-shaped cylinder that is closed on one side by an end wall and that is non-rotatably but axially movably connected with a first input shaft, as claimed in amended claims 1 and 4.

As noted above, neither of the references relied upon by the examiner and considered individually teaches the invention as it is now claimed in amended claims 1 and 4. And even if those references were to be combined, their combination in the manner relied upon by the examiner does not respond to the invention as it is claimed in each of those claims. Neither of those references shows a substantially cup-shaped cylinder that is closed on one side by an end wall and that is non-rotatably and axially movably connected with a first transmission input shaft. And because neither of the references individually shows or suggests such a structure, their combination cannot be said to show or suggest such a structure.

0815 A US

Claims 5, 13, and 15 each depend from claim 1, either directly or indirectly, and therefore each of those claims is similarly patentably distinguishable over the references relied upon, and for the same reasons as are given above in connection with claim 1. Additionally, each of those dependent claims contains additional recitations that further patentably distinguish the claimed combinations of elements over the disclosures of the references relied upon.

Based upon the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims as they now stand in the application are believed clearly to be in allowable form in that they patentably distinguish over the disclosures contained in the references that were cited and relied upon by the examiner, whether those references be considered in the context of 35 U.S.C. § 102 or of 35 U.S.C. § 103. Reconsideration and reexamination of this application is respectfully requested with a view toward the issuance of an early Notice of Allowance.

The examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney if this amendment raises any questions, so that any such question can be quickly resolved in order that the present application can proceed toward allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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